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ABSTRACT

This paper, intended for teachers and administrators of K-12 and two-year college vocational education programs, provides instructions for writing grant proposals. Taking the reader through the proposal from start to finish, it outlines the contents and requirements in a grant proposal. Topics covered include the grant project, layout, contents of a grant proposal, project abstract, application for assistance, budget information, budget narrative, program narrative, additional assurances and certificates, and appendix. Examples of many of these parts of a grant proposal are provided and critiqued. Contains 24 references. (KC)

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GRANT WRITERS PROPOSAL GUIDE

by

Gene E. Fusch

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ABSTRACT

The continual shift of support between local taxes, state revenues, and tuition fees has created a dilemma for vocational funding. To meet these new fiscal challenges, educational leaders have sought an increasing availability of grant funding from the federal government for specific education and training projects, such as Title II and Title III Grants for programs such as economically disadvantaged workers, retraining for dislocated workers, training for upgrading, advance career training, literacy and bi-lingual training, high school equivalency, basic skills training, and on the job training, Perkins Act, Welfare-to-Work, the U. S. Joint Training Partnership Act (JTPA), and training programs funded through the Department of Labor, Department of Agriculture, Department of Defense, National Science Foundation, and other federal granting agencies.

This grant writers proposal guide provides an overview of the contents and procedures for writing federal vocational grants. The author presents examples, insight, and summations of components frequently required in federal vocational grants.

Developed in 1995 to assist K-12, community and technical college vocational educators in their grant writing pursuits.

INTRODUCTION

In a world of growing financial constraints, K-12 schools, and community and technical colleges in the State of Washington are hard pressed to find new ways of financing and expanding their occupational offerings. Four year institutions in the State traditionally are awarded Federal grant monies for their occupational training. This is due to successful grant proposal writing personnel and the greater ease in which grant awards are tailored for the educational institutions offering four year and advanced degrees.

Vocational and applied academic grant monies are now available for community and technical colleges through the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, and other Federal acts. K-12 schools, and community and technical colleges in Washington that can successfully write and submit vocational or applied academic grant proposals can potentially receive monies from these sources. Unfortunately, many K-12 schools, and community and technical colleges in the State do not have the skilled personnel available to write proposals. In addition, these same institutions are finding that there are no vocational or applied academic grant proposal writing resource manuals or guides written specifically for their field.

To be sure, there are numerous resource guides and manuals available on the market for grant proposal writers. These guides and manuals focus on proposal writing from a general perspective, attempting to describe a wide range of grants awarded each year, both in the public and private sector. The novice K-12 school, and community and technical college vocational proposal writer is often uninformed about details peculiar to the vocational grant writing process.

More instructors at the K-12 schools, and community and technical college level in Washington are expressing interest in vocational grant proposal writing. So, too, are their administrators as they struggle to operate their schools with less money. Often, these same schools do not have the skilled personnel on staff to write their grant proposals, nor can these schools compete with higher salaries offered to skilled grant proposal writers by four year institutions in the State. The Washington K-12 school, and community and technical college must develop skilled vocational grant proposal writers from personnel already within the system.

In a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Research Association, Gallaher and Daniel (1989) identified a need for technical assistance in the preparation of grant proposals at the K-12, and community college level. This lack of technical assistance stemmed from an absence of procedural information relating to the writing of proposals.

Without skilled personnel already on staff and a lack of applicable resource material, the Washington K-12, and community and technical colleges will not be able to effectively compete with other institutions within the State for limited dollars awarded each

year. If these schools are to be able to successfully write vocational grant proposals, they must have the resources available to do so. Therefore, in order to assist personnel in meeting these needs, this paper outlines contents and requirements in a grant proposal.

THE GRANT PROJECT

The first step is to prepare a rough outline of the project one would like to have funded. After one has a basic plan for the project, find a federal, state, local, or private funding source. Most funders will give one a (RFP) request for proposal which outlines the specifications they are looking for. In order to be successful one should curtail the project to meet the funding specifications.

The federal and state grant readers like to see consortiums or advisory committees for projects made up from persons in education institution, business, labor, and community groups. When one can develop this type of consortium or advisory committee for the proposed project, one will have a better chance of getting funded.

LAYOUT

The grant reader is human and gets tired of reading grants, when there are many proposals. Therefore, to increase the chances of being funded, use large clear print (minimum of 12 pt.), keep the grant looking clean and easy to read, don't use trade specific vocabulary without defining terminology, and follow closely the lay-out of the specifics in the RFP.

CONTENTS OF A GRANT PROPOSAL

A well designed grant proposal will contain the following contents:

1. Table of contents,
2. abstract
3. application for assistance,
4. budget information,
5. budget narrative,
6. program narrative,
7. additional assurances and certificates, and
8. appendix.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The table of contents should be arranged in the order of the specifications in (RFP) Request For Proposal. Depending on the parameters itemized in the RFP, the contents may have added sections for partnership agreements, key personnel, etc. or these items can be put in the appendix. The following is an example of the table of contents for a Federal grant proposal for a bi-lingual vocational training grant The author wrote:

EXAMPLE: CONTENTS

ABSTRACT 1

I. APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE 4

II. BUDGET INFORMATION 6

III. BUDGET NARRATIVE 8

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2: SNOHOMISH COUNTY EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS 85

3: REFUGEE FORUM'S MISSION STATEMENT 90

4: REFUGEE FORUM REPORT 92

ABSTRACT

Even though the abstract is put first in the grant proposal, it should be written last. The abstract can be thought of as a summary. The abstract should be no more than two pages and preferably one page in length. A well designed abstract will briefly summarize your project objectives, methodology, evaluation, and dissemination.

The following is an example of an abstract from a Department of Ecology grant proposal the author wrote:

EXAMPLE: ABSTRACT

This project will be conducted in three stages:

A. Research
B. Integration of Results from Part A
   1. Analysis of data and recommendations
   2. Development of Training program
C. Delivery of training program

The research in Stage "A" will be conducted through contacting and networking with other States to obtain information on similar programs already in progress, associations, CFC producers, the five major companies who manufacture over 95% of the appliances produced in the United States, major service companies, refrigerant distributors, the manufacturers of different recovery systems, larger companies involved in appliance recycling, purchasers, both locally and nationally, of CFCs and compressor oils, and sources and for disposal of capacitors having PCB potential.

In Stage "B", the Project Director will analyze data from the research in Stage "A" of this project for feasible application by the public and private solid waste agencies, generators or handlers, and scrap metal recyclers in Washington State. This will be done through scenarios that will assist in design of approaches in a variety of situations. The approaches utilized will vary according to reliance on on-site facilities and staff to reliance on off-site services that would pick-up appliances or parts thereof or would visit the process at the site.

Several of the preferable approaches (from small portable and stationary equipment, to assembly-line type recycling equipment) will be detailed in a report for the Department of Ecology. In addition, the equipment and methods of the preferable approaches will be explained in a hand-out for use in the training workshops.

A training program will be developed for seven half-day training workshops. The training program will offer a well designed hand-out identifying the equipment and methods of the preferable approaches to refrigerant appliance recycling. In addition, the hand-out will also identify the regulations regarding refrigerant appliance recovery, and a list of sources and cost or profits for disposal of appliances or parts thereof.

The training workshop will be presented through a multi-media method using overhead transparencies, examples on VHS video, demonstration, and dynamic discussion.

Stage "C" of the project will be the delivery of seven half-day training workshops at Spokane, Yakima, Wenatchee, Olympia, Longview, Mt. Vernon, and Port Angeles.

Upon conclusion of this project, the Project Director will deliver to Ecology the lesson plan for the training workshop, training workshop hand-out, the project final report, and a VHS cassette (video) that provides a training surrogate to those unable to attend one of the workshops.

APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE

This section is the formal application that one fills out that asks for the money. Usually the funder will furnish a form to be filled out and signed by the CEO, president, or superintendent. If the form is not supplied, one needs to develop it with the following information:

1) RFP number or identification,
2) grant project title,
3) school name,
4) school address,
5) contact persons name, address, and phone,
6) federal ID number,
7) amount requested for project, and
8) signature by the CEO, president, or superintendent.

BUDGET INFORMATION

This section is where one details the proposed budget for wages, benefits, equipment, supplies, travel expense, etc. Often there is a form supplied by the funder for this section. If one is not supplied, a simple budget information sheet can be designed. This is a sample budget information sheet The author wrote for an Department of Ecology grant proposal:

EXAMPLE: BUDGET INFORMATION

1.	Personnel	18,000
2.	Fringe Benefits	(Included)
3.	Travel	400
4.	Equipment	(In-kind)
5.	Supplies	300
6.	Phone - Long Distance	200
7.	Total Direct Cost	18,900
8.	Indirect Cost	800
9.	Total Funds Requested	19,700

BUDGET NARRATIVE

The budget narrative is the section where you, the grant proposal writer, explains your budget. One details why money is needed for different items; for example one would explain why $400 is needed in the budget information sheet above. The following is an example of a budget narrative the author wrote for a Department of Ecology grant proposal:

EXAMPLE: BUDGET NARRATIVE

1. Personnel

Project Director: **18,000**

Conducts all three stages of project:

A. Research

B. 1. Analysis of data and recommendations

2. Development of Training program

C. Delivery of training program

2. Fringe Benefits

Benefits are figured into the flat contract salary paid to the Project Director for the hours required in this project, in addition to his regular teaching contract.

3. Travel

A travel estimate of 1430 miles at $0.28 per mile **400**

Mileage is computed based upon the need to call on research sources and to travel to seven training workshops at Spokane, Yakima, Wenatchee, Olympia, Longview, Mt. Vernon, and Port Angeles.

4. Equipment (In-kind)

In-kind equipment for research, analysis of data, and development and delivery of training program will be supplied

by Renton Technical College. Anticipated equipment will be: Computer System with word processor, VHS video camera with player and monitor, overhead projector, refrigerator and recovery equipment, office space and phone system.

5. Supplies 300

Supplies to include: Recycled paper for progress reports; final report documenting the research, analysis, and conclusions; and hand-outs for training program workshops. In addition, supplies will cover cost of overhead transparencies, video cassettes, and any other necessary project success.

6. Phone - Long Distance 200

Long distance phone calls are computed as will be necessary to conduct research to collect valuable and relevant data from other states having similar programs. In addition calls will be made to various associations, manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers dealing with CFC recovery and equipment, procedures used in recovery, procedures used in resale of items recovered from the refrigeration appliances, and any other data necessary for the success of this project.

7. Total Direct Cost 18,900

8. Indirect Cost 800

4.2% indirect cost 800

Indirect cost are those expenses incurred by college payroll cost, bookkeeping, and purchasing. Indirect cost are calculated at a minimum 4.2 percent.

9. Total Budget 19,700

Larger grant projects are more complex, as shown in this example of a budget narrative from the federal grant proposal for a bi-lingual vocational training grant the author wrote:

EXAMPLE: BUDGET NARRATIVE

1. Personnel (Fringe benefits @ approximately 30%)

Program Manager (14 months-full time)	53,000
Office Assistant II (14 months-full time)	35,000
VESL Instructor #1 (12 months-full time)	36,000
VESL Instructor #2 (first 6 months-full time)	18,000
Lab Instructor (first 6 months-full time)	12,000
Total Personnel	$154,000

All salaries are based on current levels of personnel now employed at Everett Community College. The program manager and Office Assistance II are employed for fourteen months, the VESL Instructor #1 is employed for twelve months, and all other personnel are employed for six months of the project.

2. Benefits.

Benefits for project personnel are computed at 30% and are included in #1.

3. Travel:

to Washington DC for grant purposes	2,000
mileage, to call on consortium	1,500
mileage, travel expense for dissertation	500
Total Travel	4,000

Travel costs are based upon current air-travel rates, hotel accommodations, and mileage expenses. Travel costs are included because the program manager must travel to Washington DC to the Department of Education, as well as spending time calling upon consortium members within the geographic area of the grant project. Travel and hotel expense is also included for costs accrued for the project dissertation.

4. Equipment

Sixteen computer systems with soundboards	40,000

The cost for the project computers, complete with sound-boards, headphones, and microphones was obtained from Trinity Technology, at approximately $2,500 per computer. The grant proposal states that the project will need a minimum of sixteen units (fifteen for students, one for data entry) for the success of the project.

5. Supplies:

computer disks	8,000
office and instructional supplies	5,000
Total Supplies	13,000

The computer disks are to be used in Stage One of the project, with the soundboards indicated above, where the student spends alternate days in the computer lab, working on special vocational English language skills. Office and instructional supplies, ie: photocopies, staples, tape, transparents, etc., shall be utilized in the project as needed.

The project costs for the supplies was obtained from the current costs of 3.5 computer disks and cost of office and instructional supplies for ESL-type programs now existing on campus.

6. Contractual .-0-

7. Other

a. Facilities in-kind

This includes current campus buildings and maintenance, parking lots, campus library, student center, etc.

b. Software Approximately - $27,000 in-kind

This includes current campus ALA (American Language Association.) programs and automotive vocational English programs previously used in the college pilot project. This software and hardware was funded by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Technology Act.

9. Indirect Cost:

8% indirect cost 16,880

Indirect costs are those expenses incurred by current college payroll costs, bookkeeping and purchasing, and registration.

Indirect costs are calculated at eight percent, as per grant proposal guidelines.

TOTAL BUDGET **$227,880**

PROGRAM NARRATIVE

The program narrative is a detailed explanation of what, where, when, who, why, and how. The program narrative may have topics such as:

1) Introduction
2) Needs Assessment
3) Target Population
4) Current Trends
5) Who will Perform Project
6) How Project Will be Performed
   * This may be itemized by parts or stages, ie: Part I, Part II, Part III, etc.
7) Location of Project
8) Time-frame for Project
9) Summary of Program Narrative
10) Dissemination

Additional topics and/or headings are added as needed for each individual project. Basically, the program narrative is the detailed explanation of what one plans to do from beginning to end.

In speaking to several grant proposal readers, they all have stated that the number one reason grant proposals are rejected is due to the writer not following the specifications. Therefore, the program narrative should reflect the specifications in the funders RFP.

Common to all program narratives is a needs assessment, or answer to "why is this project even necessary?". The needs assessment should be supported by expert documentation for validity. The following is a needs assessment The author wrote for a bi-lingual vocational training grant proposal. Notice the need, and, then, the objective to fulfill the need:

EXAMPLE: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

There are approximately ten thousand refugees currently residing in Snohomish County, and six hundred or more are entering each year. Most of the refugees speak little or no English. These refugees need to learn English, and the necessary skills, to participate in the occupational opportunities available in Snohomish County. Currently, Everett Community College offers ESL (English as a Second Language) courses to the refugees, and, although the ESL classes are very good, they do not have the necessary student contact time needed to succeed. In addition, by design, these same classes offer just the basic English survival skills.

The necessary English language skills and English technical terms needed to enter a vocational training program and to perform in the workplace will be addressed in this proposal.

The proposed project's objectives are 1) to identify those refugee/immigrant individuals needing English and Technical English language training in specified occupational areas, 2) to train these individuals in growing occupations in Snohomish County, and 3) to assist these individuals in job placement, with a minimum goal of sixty-five percent, either placed in a job or continuing related vocational preparatory education.

This proposed project will take these referred refugee and immigrant students and send them through the proposed bi-lingual vocational education program. During Stage One of this project the student will attend classes in basic to advanced English language skills, as well as technical English applications. In Stage Two, the student attends a vocational/technical training program on the college campus, as well as attending a one-hour per day, five days a week, workforce preparation class where workforce skills are developed and English language skills are reinforced.

The project's third objective, placement, begins in Stage Three, during the last quarter of the program, with a mentoring/shadowing program. The student will be present within the workplace in his/her chosen industry. This is made possible through the cooperation of the project's consortium, whose members represent each industry involved.

Upon successful completion of the program, the student may be assisted with placement through networking contacts from the mentor/shadowing stage, with assistance from the Refugee Forum, or with the cooperation of the program manger.

For the purposes of the proposed project, the program manager, with the assistance of the dean and the executive director of the Refugee Forum, shall gather information and prepare a summation report upon completion of the project. The program manager will use information collected during the course of the project in the formative evaluation process, which will be made available to interested parties.

There was not an assessment supported by expert documentation for validity.

This needs assessment had no expert documentation supporting it for validity, however in the actual grant proposal the author put the supporting documentation prior to the needs assessment. The following is an example of documentation for the needs assessment entitled Target Population:

EXAMPLE: TARGET POPULATION

The refugee population in Snohomish County increased by six hundred refugees in 1991 (see appendix part III-1: Snohomish Health District Refugees Report). The Refugee Forum estimates state that there are approximately ten thousand refugees currently living in Snohomish County, forty-nine percent of which are former USSR citizens, mostly Ukrainians. (see appendix part III-4: Refugee Forum Report)

In addition, the Forum also states that refugee families average 4.7 members. In July 1992, there were five hundred refugee families on welfare and an additional one hundred and twenty families on food stamps only. (see appendix part III-4: Refugee Forum Report)

The report also found that the refugees entering Snohomish County have limited or no English speaking ability.

Currently, thirty-nine percent of the refugees entering Snohomish County are Asian, thirty-two percent are Vietnamese, six percent are Cambodian, and one percent are Laotian. (see appendix part III-4 Refugee Forum Report)

Of the current and expected number of Asian refugees, a number are older men that have special needs: (see appendix part I: Consortium Members - Refugee Community Group Statements)

1. They are former military officers, and have spent the last fifteen years in a communist re-education camp.
2. They were well educated at one time.
3. They spoke good English at one time, but cannot speak much English today.
4. They are fifty to sixty years old.
5. They are in poor health and may have high sick leave.

In addition to the refugees, there is a small, unrecorded population of non-English speaking immigrants in Snohomish County. This population will also be assisted in this project.

After you have explained your project in detail, you briefly summarize the key points, followed by dissemination.

Dissemination of the project explains how you will show the funding source you have done the project. It may be by a report of the project, a lecture to a group or at a conference, development of a curriculum or product that can be used by others, etc.

ADDITIONAL ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATES

These are usually forms for the CEO and any project partners to sign verifying to the funder that if they grant the money, the project will do what it was stated it would do.

APPENDIX

The appendix is where one puts any supporting data for the grant proposal, such as: resumes of project personnel, statistics supporting the needs assessment, letters of support, etc.

SUMMARY

For successful grant proposal writing, follow this guide, read the materials listed in the bibliography, and take the first step in preparing a rough outline of the project you, the writer, would like to have funded. After you have a basic plan for your project, find a federal, state, local, or private funding source.

Keep the interest of the funder and grant reader in mind when preparing the grant proposal. Then, layout a well-designed proposal containing a table of contents, abstract, application for assistance, budget information, budget narrative, program narrative, additional assurances and certificates, and appendix. Above all else, follow the funding specifications. Grant proposal writing can be difficult, stressful, enjoyable, and rewarding. According to D. Bower, in addition to the Federal Government, State and Local Government, there are 800,000 corporations and 24,859 foundations offering over 40 billion dollars in grant monies (1994). With intuition and effort, your writing skills may enable you to tap into available sources for funding projects.

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